MODERN PAGANS

CHARLES M. SHELDON

MODERN PAGANS

BY

CHARLES M. SHELDON

Author of In His Steps

THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN

NEW YORK CINCINNATI

Copyright, 1917, by
CHARLES M. SHELDON

First Edition Printed August, 1917
Reprinted March, 1920

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGE

The Modern Pagan in His Home..... 5

CHAPTER II

The Modern Evangelist and His Critics... 25

CHAPTER III

The Pagan and the Meetings..... 42

CHAPTER IV

The Power of the Spirit..... 60

CHAPTER I

THE MODERN PAGAN IN HIS HOME

It is easy to be "civilized" and at the same time Godless.

MR. RALPH WALLACE sat reading the evening paper, and as his custom was, making comments on his reading to his wife across the table. Like hundreds of other husbands in Westville, he wanted the daily first of all the family, but unlike very many, he did not insist on going off somewhere to devour it alone.

"The Woman's Federation is after Mr. Bryan again, Lucy. They passed a resolution at their meeting yesterday voting him to be prejudiced." Mr. Wallace chuckled as he glanced at his wife. Mrs. Wallace was a placid, self-contained woman, and she simply smiled and said: "I didn't vote either

way. The discussion did not interest me."

Mr. Wallace was back in the paper.

"Another wreck on the F. and G. W. Six killed and nine injured. That road ought to run a wrecking outfit and a hospital on every regular passenger train to save time. That makes four wrecks on the F. and G. W. inside two weeks."

"It's dreadful, isn't it?" Mrs. Wallace murmured as she took another sock out of her bag of mending. "I wonder that the public continues to ride at all over that road."

"O, they don't care. Life is cheap nowadays and the railroads know it. There's another riot in Tokio over the peace negotiations. Men are not far from the brute after all they brag of their civilization." Mr. Wallace turned the paper over and at that moment the oldest boy in the family came into the sitting room and picked up a pile of books on the reading table. His father

looked at him pleasantly and said, "How does college go, Harry?"

"All right," the boy answered, good-naturedly. "The profs. seem to think I haven't anything else to do but study, and each one of them acts as if his were the only study worth while, but I guess I'm good for them. So here goes for three hours." The stalwart fellow caught up the books, leaped upstairs to his room three steps at a time, and his father and mother could hear him bolt his door, prepared to shut out his brother John or any visiting chum who might call.

"Do you think Harry is studying too hard?" Mrs. Wallace asked, a little anxiously.

Mr. Wallace looked up from the paper and smiled.

"What! That young ox! He's sound as a race horse. You ought to have seen him at the football game Saturday. He isn't suffering any from brain fag. Don't worry. Study is good

for the young rascal. I hope the profs. will lay it on good and hard."

"I wish he didn't play football," Mrs. Wallace said, gravely. "I wonder, Ralph, that you are willing."

Mr. Wallace did not reply. There was a mild difference of opinion over the subject in the Wallace family. It was not very deep or serious, but it was a difference, and Mr. Wallace took the ground that it was useless to argue with a woman, and seldom did so. But he respected his wife's views and was sorry she did not see the matter as he did.

He was still silently reading when Agnes, the older girl, came in from the music room where she had been practicing.

"Where's Harry, mother?" she said. "I want to ask him some questions about the trigonometry for to-morrow."

"He's in his room, dear. He just went up there."

"O, well, it's no use then," Agnes spoke in a tone of disappointment.

"You know, mother, you could pound the door down and he wouldn't answer."

"I think he would if anybody tried," Mr. Wallace said with a chuckle. "What is it? Maybe I can help you?"

"I don't believe you can," Agnes said in some doubt of her father's mathematical ability.

"Show it to me, young lady. What did I go to Williams for?"

The girl smiled and came up to her father with the textbook which she picked up off the table.

"O! *Original* propositions! Young lady, that's not fair. You don't mean to say you have tackled that sort of thing!"

"I do, though. Now then, pater, if you think college is easy these days, work out one of them."

"No, thank you. Give me something easier."

The girl laughed. "I knew you couldn't do it, pater. There's no one in the family can help me except Harry,

and I don't want to disturb him now."

"How would *I* do?" a voice asked as the other brother, John, came into the room from the hallway.

"You haven't time," Agnes said, doubtfully.

"Then I'll make some," said John, good-naturedly. "Let me see it, sis. Um—the problem of determining the values of the n^{th} roots of unity is equivalent to the geometrical problem of inscribing a regular polygon of n sides in a circle. What you want to do is to find the three cube roots of unity. Now, Gauss has shown in his Disquisitions Arithmetical this can only be done with a compass and ruler when n is a prime of the form 2P plus 1. Therefore—"

"O, say that again. I don't just get it through my stupid head," cried Agnes, her pencil at her lips and a severe frown on her brow.

"N must be a prime form of 2P plus 1. You can't find the three cube roots

of unity without inscribing a polygon in the circle. Do you understand that?"

"Yes, I understand that. But why do I want to find the three cube roots of unity?"

"Why, you goose, that is the proposition," John roared. "Come upstairs. I can make you see it all right before I go downtown. Mother, I'm going after that yarn you wanted. I forgot it last time. I'll be back before nine."

"You needn't trouble about it, John," his mother replied, affectionately. "It will break into your studies to go down to-night."

"And serve me right for not remembering. I'll go on my wheel in a jiffy."

The brother and sister went upstairs where John had a wall blackboard in his room, and Mr. Wallace again resumed his paper reading which had been interrupted. After a few minutes of silence he looked up again.

"So they're planning to start a revival here this fall, and I suppose the business

men will be asked to subscribe to the fund for evangelistic expenses. Excuse me."

"When is the revival to begin?" asked Mrs. Wallace, with a little show of interest.

"Well, I'll read you the announcement," Mr. Wallace replied, and went right on reading from the paper.

"Beginning next week, the revival meetings which have been planned by the churches for the last two months will start in the different sections of the city as advertised. Mr. Ambrose Spencer will have charge of the central district and much interest is being shown in his appearance and in his methods. Notice of the other speakers and singers will be found in the column of religious news for the week. The expenses for these meetings are being met by pledges voluntarily made by the churches. It is estimated that from $2,000 to $2,500 a week will cover the expenses for the campaign."

"That's what I call extravagance." Mr. Wallace elevated his brows and there was a trace of a sneer on his lip. "I never heard yet of one of those evangelists who wasn't a grafter. Trust them to work the revival dodge for all it is worth. Remember Rollins, the last professional evangelist gospel crank we had here? He got seventeen hundred dollars from the faithful for five weeks' work. I call it pretty good pay for one man, considering the fact that he not only didn't do the town any good but actually did it a lot of harm. I suppose I'll be called on to subscribe liberally to Mr. Ambrose Spencer's tidy little salary. All the business men catch it from every little thing that comes along. But if I give anything to help this revival, it will be in my sleep."

"Perhaps this revivalist is not like others we've had here," Mrs. Wallace remarked, indifferently. "The papers have spoken well of him."

"They are all alike," rejoined Mr.

Wallace, shortly. "It's all excitement and froth and hullabaloo and vulgar appeals to emotion, and when it's all over nothing to show for it. I think the whole thing is a nuisance and I don't give a cent to help it along."

Mrs. Wallace did not appear to be much interested, not enough at least to make any reply, and her husband turned to the paper again. During a silence of a few minutes it may be of interest to describe a little more in detail this Wallace family.

Mr. Wallace was a merchant with a good business which brought him an income of $18,000 or $20,000 a year. He carried $10,000 insurance, owned his home, which was a well-furnished residence, besides paying taxes on considerable valuable real estate in the city. He was a member of several lodges, but seldom attended the meetings, being a great lover of home. He was an enthusiastic politician, especially during the State and national campaigns, but

he was never known to take any interest in municipal or county affairs, and, indeed, quite often expressed his decided disgust at the rottenness of local politics. He regarded the prohibitory law as a great mistake and had been heard often to say that business needed the saloon to make things lively. In his personal habits he was a total abstainer so far as liquor was concerned, but an almost habitual smoker. His cigar bill for the past year had amounted to $215. To be sure, he always bought the most expensive of all brands and was very liberal with friends. And also he saved at other points, notably in his refusal to subscribe to the State Temperance Union and in his economizing of church and Sunday school expenses. He never attended church himself, preferring to read his Sunday paper or a good novel, but he did not object to his wife going, and would have been strangely disconcerted if his children had not attended Sunday school, especially when they

were little. "But there's no use in squandering money, Lucy," he would say. "The church is always begging, always passing a contribution box. Let the children take a penny apiece, that's enough. And I suppose we can afford to chip in twenty-five cents a Sunday on the church pledge. Ministers have to live, and the church on the whole does more good than harm, but a mighty poor, dull sort of an institution, I take it. I can get more good out of a good book than I can out of a hundred sermons."

So for years the Wallace children and their mother had attended Sunday school and church with their pennies and their twenty-five cents a week and had grown up to think of the church as an institution that must somehow be supported with pennies and quarters, which people gave, not as an obligation, but doled out as a condescending act of charity. Mr. Wallace was rather glad to have the house to himself Sunday

morning. He liked the quiet hour or two for his Sunday paper and his cigar. Then the family gathered for a big dinner at half past one, to which of late years a business friend was invited or one of Agnes's or Harry's college mates. Mr. Wallace wore out the balance of Sunday by getting his mail or of late years by a spin out into the country in his new automobile. In the evening he smoked again over a book or occasionally invited in two or three friends for a game of whist. Monday morning he was ready for business again, punctual and early. A man of no vices or dissipation so called, the community classed him as a successful business man, and when he died the daily papers would print his picture together with a two-column obituary reciting his moral virtues and pointing him to young men as an example of what thrift, enterprise, and shrewdness can accomplish. In other words, a twentieth-century pagan, about as selfish as they are made, of

whom there are thousands in the United States to-day.

Mrs. Wallace was, as we have said, of a placid temperament, a woman five years younger than her husband. She had married young, and at forty-six was a good-looking, good-natured person with considerable pride in her children and husband and no particular enthusiasm or ambition. She belonged to the Presbyterian Church and was a member of three clubs—one musical, one literary, and one domestic science. Toward these clubs she maintained an attitude of mild interest, which, however, seldom rose any higher. She was a regular church attendant except at the prayer meeting, where she was never seen. Whenever there was a supper or a fair or a social function, Mrs. Wallace could be counted on to do her share with good-natured willingness. She had in turn directed her three children through the Sunday school, from which they had received the only Bible instruction they

ever had. The Bible was never read or studied in the Wallace home, and as the children grew older they had gradually dropped out of the Sunday school altogether, with only a feeble remonstrance from their mother and with almost positive agreement on the part of their father.

"O, what is the use of their being tied down to the Sunday school any longer, Lucy? Let them have freedom in their religious life of all places. Agnes says her teacher isn't interesting, and Harry can't stand the superintendent they have now. Don't compel them to go to church. That's what set me against the whole thing."

So the religious life of the Wallace family trailed off into a sort of negative sweetened-water kind of morality minus passion, self-sacrifice, or enthusiasm. Mrs. Wallace had her moments of vague dissatisfaction with it all. Her inner life was barren of positive convictions, and there were times when she

could not help wishing for something more real and satisfying for herself, her husband, and her children. But it was easy to drift along and enjoy life in a happy-go-easy fashion. Her husband gave her a liberal allowance for household expenses, for amusements, dress, etc. Her children were not dissipated; they were good natured for the most part, they bade fair to be successful in their career. She was not alarmed about anything in particular. She saw no reason why they should be too religious. So the time came when she took for granted the situation in which she found herself alone in her attendance on church services and church work, with her own interest oftener nominal than real, and the tie that bound her to the church so slender that it required only a slight tension to break it altogether. Do you know this woman? There are a good many like her in the United States. They are the negative factor in religious service. They add

heaviness, not weight, to the kingdom of God on the earth.

As for the Wallace children at the time of this story, they were like hundreds of others in their development and outlook on life where the home environment had been the same. Harry was twenty-one, a perfect physical animal, absorbed for three months of his college year in football, with enough ambition in his studies to keep him about in the middle of his class, neither brilliant nor stupid, with a blind worship for physical prowess and a mild contempt for weakness of any kind, and his mother's easy-going temperament which could readily accept any indifferent habit religiously if not morally. He was in his sophomore year and had begun to think about studying medicine for his life-work. Agnes was one year younger than Harry, a girl of generous impulses, but selfish in the extreme when it suited her convenience. She was like her father in her habit of open and constant

criticism of people and things she did not like. On that account she was not popular in college, and wondered why her friends were so few and why so many of the girls said such sharp things to her and about her. One of her grievances as she passed through college was the fact that she had never been elected to any of the class offices. Secretly she was ambitious in that direction, and one time her brother John surprised her crying hard over the result of a class election in which Agnes's bitterest enemy was chosen by an overwhelming vote as class president.

"She's the meanest girl in college," Agnes sobbed.

"Who is?" asked John, sympathetically.

"Miss Barclay. The meanest, most horrid creature. And now she's class president. She'll be so stuck up there will be no living with her."

"Do you have to live with her?" John asked, incautiously.

"No, I don't," snapped Agnes.

"I don't see the hardship," said John, a little maliciously. "Miss Barclay strikes me as a very pretty girl."

"You must have queer taste," exclaimed Agnes.

"Uncultivated, Professor Turner says. But it's the best I've got so far and I had always supposed Miss Barclay was pretty. But if you say she's horrid, I suppose that settles it. You have studied ethics and I haven't."

"Go away," snapped Agnes. "You're horrid like all the rest!"

John Wallace was the odd one of the family. He was absolutely independent and went and came a rule to himself. He was only eighteen years old, but the one member of the family gifted with some real intellectual insight. He had a mathematical intuition of which even Harry took account, which in part compensated him for a rather frail body unfitted for the hurly-burly of athletics. He seldom went to church and had few

companions. His affections seemed to go out almost wholly toward his mother, and she returned them as much as her mild disposition allowed.

This, then, was the character of the Wallace family in Westville on the night when Ambrose Spencer began his services in that town.

CHAPTER II

THE MODERN EVANGELIST AND HIS CRITICS

Criticism is not always knowledge, and judgment of others is seldom justice.

THE modern evangelist is one of the most criticised men in the world to-day. He suffers by comparison with every cheap and sensational man who makes evangelism merely a professional work. Ambrose Spencer knew this very well when he left a large and influential church in response to what he considered a large call. When he stood up at that first meeting in Westville he felt what he had felt many times before—the presence of a large number of critical people who had come out not to receive the bread of life, but to see if they liked the way in which the bread was made.

Half way through the service Ambrose Spencer noted two young men

seated in the very center of the house. They happened to be surrounded by groups of older men and the contrast with their wide-awake, earnest faces was sharp and distinct. One of these young men was Harry Wallace. How he came to be present at this first meeting of the evangelist is a little story by itself. Briefly, his football captain, Norman Fairview, had invited him to go. Fairview was a college Y. M. C. A. man active in the Association and without a particle of cant or goody-goodness about him. He was the strongest man in college, stood well in his classes, and Wallace admired him immensely without understanding in the least Fairview's religious nature. So when the captain that afternoon on the ball ground after practice slapped Wallace on the back and said, "Don't you want to go down with me to Spencer's meeting to-night, old man?" Wallace had felt complimented and agreed to meet Fairview at his room and go along down

with him. He did not say anything at home about his plan for the evening, but simply said he was going out. It was not because he was afraid of opposition or ridicule, but he simply did not care to say anything about it, thinking to himself as he went out: "It's only one night. I can't afford to go any more with all my term work piling up." He was behind somewhat in his classes, and with football practice for a big college game in prospect, was very busy.

As the service went on he began to grow uncomfortable. At first he had sat there mildly critical of the singing and the notices and a number of little things that seemed not in the best taste. As that gradually wore off he found himself compelled to listen to the evangelist, who began to speak in a very simple, direct manner, without dramatic effort or affectation. Fairview had whispered to him at the moment Spencer rose to preach: "Fine-looking fellow, isn't he? Strongest man in Amherst in

eighty-nine." That made Wallace look at Spencer with double interest. Certainly, the man was a fine specimen physically. He had a pleasing voice and an attractive manner. Gradually these things vanished from Wallace's mind as the things the evangelist kept saying found place there. His subject was personal individual religious experience. He used many illustrations to show how a man could not be saved simply because he was a part of a good civilization. He must of his own accord, of his own will, and of his own experience eat the bread of life. Just as no man can eat physical food for another, so no man can put himself in another man's place religiously. His spiritual life must grow up in him, a distinct, personal, real, conscious, saving thing, all his own.

"It is a fair question, young men," Spencer said eagerly, for the first time noting the faces of Wallace and Fairview and speaking in that personal,

direct way which was a marked characteristic of his evangelism, "it is a fair question to ask if you have any religious experience, and if not why not? Who is Master in your life? What is the compelling and impelling motive that governs your most enthusiastic and ambitious moments? What is the great thing for you? Is it physical strength? Is it intellect or art? Is it love of money? Is it thirst for fame? Is it search for pleasure? What is the First of life? What would you fight the hardest for, or lose sleep for the longest? What is the object of your most passionate hate or love? In other words, what is your God, before whom you burn your incense and in whose presence you are willing to take off your shoes and heap high the altar of sacrifice? I say these are fair questions to ask, and I want you to ask them of yourselves. For the possession of a true, deep, joyful, religious experience which is your own marks the difference between a

soul that exists for self and a soul that exists for service." So he went on for half an hour emphasizing the one point that a person's real life was never developed and could never grow until there was a real, passionate, positive mastery of the life by the Divine Force which alone made all action of the soul full of meaning and power.

When he finally closed he did it so suddenly that Wallace was not expecting it. In fact, he was confused by the abrupt transition from the sermon to the prayer. That in itself was a brief petition of only four or five sentences, but it was specially tender in its longing desire for all young life that it might know the master hand of the Divine laid upon its human loves and will and ambition and desire.

After the prayer Wallace waited for the regular evangelistic appeal for decision which he understood was the usual method employed by all evangelists. He had gone to one of Rollin's meetings

two years before when the same appeal was made every night that was made when he was present. But Evangelist Spencer simply told the people they were free to go at any time during the singing, only asking those to remain who wished to confer with him about the Christian life.

The people stood up and Fairview glanced quietly at Wallace as different groups began to go out.

"No, I'm not going to stay," Wallace said, but Fairview had not spoken a word. They passed out together and walked along for a while in silence.

"It was a good, square talk," said Fairview, speaking in his sturdy fashion. "I like Spencer. He's healthy in his mind."

"Yes, I liked him," said Wallace, slowly. It was a good deal for him to say.

Fairview was a man of few words at any time. But his own religious experience was a very real and joyful thing

to him, and it would not have been natural for him if he had not said a few words more.

"You won't think I am meddling in what does not belong to me, old man, will you, if I tell you I have been hoping you might get some real thing out of these meetings, something that would make the Christian life a real personal thing to you?"

It was a simple thing to say, yet there were probably not half a dozen men in the whole college who could have said it to Wallace without rousing his anger or disgust. In fact, it was the first time in all his life that anyone had ever said a word to him about personal religion. His father had never dreamed of such a thing, his mother had never dared. That sounds strange, but it is the truth. This woman, who was a nominal Christian, who belonged to a church, had never felt enough of the real life of a real Christian to talk about it in a natural way to her own children. And as the years

passed on and they had grown up, she had become afraid to mention the matter to them. When such conditions are not uncommon in what we call good families in America, is it any wonder that there is a great number of men and women in our civilization who have no use for prayer or churches or enthusiasm for missions, or, to say the last word, for God himself? For what is a lack of personal religious experience but a real lack of knowledge of God and of one's own soul?

The two young men walked along through the night for several minutes before Wallace spoke. His face was flaming and he was glad of the darkness.

"Why, no, I don't consider it meddling. But the whole thing is mighty unreal to me. I don't see anything in it."

"Wish I could help," was all Fairview ventured to say. They had reached a corner where the street to Fairview's room branched off from Wallace's way

home. There was almost an awkward moment. Fairview laid a hand on Wallace's arm.

"Well, good night, old man. God could do great things with you if you would only let him."

Wallace did not reply to this except to say good night, and they parted abruptly, Wallace on reaching home going directly to his room, although Agnes and John were in the sitting room as he came in. He bolted his door as he very often did and sat down to his table to study.

It was nearly ten o'clock, but he had never felt more wide-awake. It was not at all true that he was "under conviction," as we say in the old phraseology, for which we have not yet found any satisfactory substitute. There was a mingling of mental disturbance together with more or less irritation. For a few minutes he sat at his table with his elbows on it and his books unopened. Then he suddenly shook himself and

said out loud: "O pshaw! Get down to business!" He opened up his books and began to study. It was after one o'clock when he went to bed.

Next morning at the breakfast table Mr. Wallace was reading the newspaper account of the meetings. Among other items the paper said, speaking of Mr. Spencer's sermon, "There was a crowd out to hear the Reverend Spencer, and it was in a critical attitude. The sermon itself was quite free from sensational features, quite tame in fact. There were no oratorical flights, no thrilling passages. A very ordinary effort, although he held his audience well. It is predicted that now public curiosity is satisfied, the audiences will dwindle down. Many present last night expressed themselves as disappointed in the evangelist. They had expected something more sensational and attractive. A good deal of criticism is heard on the street to-day over the amount of money required by the church com-

mittee to carry on the campaign. The amount asked for is between two thousand dollars and two thousand five hundred dollars a week. This is considered a large sum for a town the size of Westville to raise. After all incidental expenses are paid it is reckoned by the public that Mr. Ambrose Spencer will carry off for his share about six hundred and fifty dollars or seven hundred dollars, a good tidy sum for two weeks' work, especially when it is considered that the number of converts he is likely to make will be small. The average citizen cannot understand how the average evangelist earns his money, especially when the average preacher who has the care of a church and a parish is expected to get along on as much in six months as most evangelists receive in six weeks.

"Mr. Spencer will preach to-night on 'The New Birth,' and the meeting will begin promptly at seven thirty."

"There! That's what I say," Mr. Wallace commented. "It's an extrava-

gant lot. What preacher in Westville gets anything like three hundred dollars a week? And this man is an ordinary preacher sponging on the community and lazing around the country, having all his expenses paid, putting up at the best hotels, and having a good time generally. Great fake, I call it."

"I say, father, I don't just think the paper hit it off right on the preaching," said Harry, who with all his faults had a very large sense of fair play in his make-up. "I thought his sermon was fine—far above the average. I tell you there aren't many preachers can preach so that people will stand up for half or three quarters of an hour to listen, and that's what they did last night. The News is 'way off in its account. Spencer is an unusual preacher, I think."

"Why! How's that, young man?" Mr. Wallace turned a little red and looked at his son hard. "What do you know about it?"

"Well, I was there, for one thing," Harry replied, coloring a little, but speaking in a straightforward way. All the family stared at him. Mrs. Wallace looked confused.

"How was the singing? Of a cheap order, wasn't it?" asked Agnes, who was extremely sensitive on the question of music in church. One reason she had stopped going to Sunday school was because she did not like some of the hymns in the Sunday school book.

"O, I don't know." Harry was irritated suddenly. "I'm no judge of such music. Most of the people seemed to enjoy it. But I say the News doesn't give a fair account of Spencer. He's all right."

Mr. Wallace opened his lips as if to speak, but shut them again and turned to the paper. Harry applied himself to his breakfast and no one else asked any question for several minutes. After a while John said, "Spencer is a college man, isn't he?"

"Yes, Amherst, eighty-nine, so Fairview told me."

"Was Fairview at the meeting?" Mrs. Wallace asked.

"Yes. We went together."

"Any other students there?" asked Mr. Wallace, curiously.

"Yes, sir. I saw quite a number."

"What do they say about Spencer?"

"I don't know. I haven't talked with them."

"What does Fairview think?" Agnes asked. Fairview was one of Agnes's heroes out of the very few she carried on her list.

"Fairview thinks Spencer is all right," replied Harry, with vigor. "He says Spencer has a healthy mind. But if you're all so curious about him, why don't you go yourselves and hear him?"

Harry looked at his father as he sometimes did in his open-hearted, frank manner. His father laughed shortly as he rose to go down to the store.

"Catch me. I've no desire to add to

the audience of dupes who are hypnotized by an impostor."

As his father went out of the room Harry said, speaking to his mother: "I don't think father is fair to Mr. Spencer. He's not an impostor. And I'm sure he does not hypnotize people. It struck me he was a very pleasant-spoken, straightforward Christian. I wish father wouldn't talk as he does."

"Your father has been deceived on several occasions by church members in business transactions," Mrs. Wallace said, timidly. "I think that accounts for his prejudice in the case of evangelists."

"He has no right to judge Spencer on that account," replied Harry, shortly. "It's not fair." He got up from the table, gathered up his books, and went out without any more words. Mrs. Wallace, Agnes, and John seemed more than usually surprised at Harry's manner, although it was the regular rule in the Wallace household for each mem-

ber to express himself with the greatest possible freedom.

"Doesn't it seem queer for Harry to go to the meeting?" Mrs. Wallace said.

"Not if Fairview asked him," said Agnes. "He would do anything Fairview asked him."

"He seemed to like Spencer pretty well," said John. "That isn't like Harry—to take to strangers at first sight."

"It seems queer to me," Mrs. Wallace murmured.

Nothing more was said about the meeting until after supper. The family had finished the meal. Mr. Wallace was at his newspaper again. Agnes had gone upstairs. John was putting on his overcoat in the hall preparatory to going out to see a classmate. Mr. Wallace was sitting in his customary place by the library table. Harry with a pile of books under his arm had started upstairs. His mother spoke suddenly, half rising from the chair.

CHAPTER III

THE PAGAN AND THE MEETINGS

The most powerful of all things is not measurable by anything.

"I was thinking some about going to the meeting to-night. You don't mind, do you, Ralph?"

"No, of course not," replied Mr. Wallace. "Go if you want to. Will Agnes go with you?"

"Agnes has an engagement with her society this evening. She says she can go to-morrow. I can go with Mrs. Thomas. I heard her say this morning she was going."

Mrs. Thomas was the Wallace's next-door neighbor.

"O, well, that's all right." Mr. Wallace resumed his paper and his cigar. Harry still remained with one foot on the stair, his books under his arm. John had opened the front door and gone out.

Harry started upstairs. Half way up he paused, then turned and came back again.

"I'll go with you, mother," he said, slowly. Mr. Wallace looked up from his paper. Mrs. Wallace looked astonished.

"You can't spare the time from your studies."

"Yes, I can. Just let me fling these books into my room."

He ran upstairs, threw his books down on the table, and was downstairs again. Mr. Wallace was hard at his paper and cigar again. As Mrs. Wallace and Harry went out he looked up again.

"I suppose it will be ten o'clock before you will get back. These evangelists are long-winded animals."

"I don't think it will be as late as that," Harry said as he and his mother went out.

On the way to the meeting scarcely a word was exchanged between Mrs.

Wallace and her son. The event of his accompanying her was so unusual that it acted almost as an embarrassment between them.

The service began as usual with singing. Mrs. Wallace, who had something of Agnes' sensitive feeling for what she called cheap church music, sat listening at first with a feeling of critical discomfort. But the solo singer was a man of much refinement and unquestioned consecration. Mrs. Wallace confessed the next morning that his voice compared favorably with many she had heard in opera. And, in fact, Mark Burleigh had begun his career as a professional opera singer until he was converted at a street meeting in Hyde Park, and Ambrose Spencer had prevailed on him to come with him. They had been together five years and were like brothers in their feeling toward each other.

During the sermon Mrs. Wallace several times glanced at Harry. He was listening carefully, but his face did not

tell anything in particular of his impressions. When Spencer finished and announced that decision cards would be distributed, Harry straightened up and his face assumed its usual expression of good-natured indifference. He took one of the cards from the usher and read it, but almost instantly put it in his pocket without signing it. When the meeting was finally dismissed he went out with his mother and their walk home was almost as silent as it had been on their way to the meeting.

Only once Mrs. Wallace said, "Mr. Spencer is a very good and pleasant speaker. His sermon had some beautiful illustrations in it, didn't you think?"

"Yes, I thought they were unusually good," said Harry.

"The News was certainly wrong in its prediction about a falling off in attendance," Mrs. Wallace murmured.

"Yes, a bigger crowd than last night. There must have been twice as many standing."

Mr. Wallace was sitting up as they came home. It was a quarter of ten. Harry went right up to his room with only a brief good night. Mr. Wallace asked only one or two questions, and next morning at breakfast little was said about the meetings. Agnes asked her mother if she wanted her to go with her to the night service, and Mrs. Wallace replied that she would be glad to have her, and spoke a word of praise of Mr. Burleigh's solo work. Harry said little and left the breakfast table early.

Mr. Wallace, on his way downtown, was saying to himself: "Queer thing Harry should take to going to these meetings. I suspect last night is about all he will want."

On going over his morning mail he came upon the following letter, which came as near disturbing his peace of mind as he ever allowed it to be moved. The letter was from an old college classmate in Washington and he read it through twice. Andrews was a business

man whom he admired greatly on account of his great ability and his success. He had accumulated a fortune since going to the Northwest, and Wallace had heard of him only occasionally.

"My dear Wallace," the letter began. "I understand Ambrose Spencer is to begin or has already begun a series of revival meetings in Westville. At the very beginning I want to commend him to you and your family as a splendid consecrated Christian gentleman. You know perhaps that when I came out here I had little or no use for churches or religion, and my main purpose was to make money. This whole Northwest is a wonderful place, and before I knew it I was up to my neck in money-making. It seemed as if the money just poured in on me and I couldn't prevent it. Well, all that time I let the church and the Bible and prayer and religion generally simply drift out of my life. My wife and children (we have three boys and one girl) were just like me, and we

were living as near like pagans as any family in a nominally Christian country can live. I gave a little money once in a while to good causes, but spent ten times as much on foolishness and luxuries. About a month ago Spencer came to Seattle and began his meetings. I had no use for them and didn't go near them until an old friend urged me to attend. I went just to please him, got interested, and to make this letter shorter, I at last got soundly converted, and I found my whole life changed. Next my wife became interested, and our children, and it seems like a miracle to me that we have all become Christians, and last Sunday we all united with the church. It was the happiest day of my life. I find the joy of it doesn't wear off. Of course I naturally feel very grateful to Mr. Spencer, and I felt an impulse to-day to write you this much and express a hope that you might meet him and get help from his gospel message. It has meant more than words

can tell to me, this new life. People may say what they please about being hypnotized and all that, as some of my business friends do, but I know well enough it is the work of the Spirit of God who has opened my eyes, through Ambrose Spencer as the human messenger, to see Christ in my daily life. I was a critical, fault-finding, narrow-minded, selfish man, living for my own ease and pleasure. I am now—I say it with praise to God—at least a man with a far different definition of life and an honest desire to build up the kingdom of God on the earth. And I trust I see the difference between that kind of a life and my old life better than anyone else.

"There is one matter I would like to mention to you, as it may possibly influence your thought of Mr. Spencer. A great deal of newspaper criticism has been made about the compensation he receives for his service as an evangelist. I happen to know that a great deal of this criticism is based on the lack of

knowledge concerning Spencer's income and his use of the voluntary offerings. In the first place, Spencer five years ago left a church in the East where he was getting a salary of $6,000 a year. From a close personal friend of Spencer's I find that during the five years he has been in evangelistic work he has not received in any one year half of the amount he once had while pastor of the Eastern church. In the second place, he is able to work only eight months in the year on account of the tremendous nervous strain. In the third place, he has by choosing this life of an evangelist cut himself off for eight months at a time from his home and his family, a great privation in itself and a greater sacrifice than even the foreign missionaries make in many ways. In the fourth place, I found out that he has dependent on him an unusually large number of poor relatives and old people, for whom he has made himself responsible, so that he is not able, even if he wished, to make any

money, to say nothing of laying up a little insurance for sickness and old age. Under these conditions it seems like a cruel thing to make the charges they do and prejudice the public against one of the most unselfish, conscientious, noble Christian gentlemen that ever lived. I know, of course, that you could never be guilty personally of such criticism, but simply wished to let you know these facts so that the newspaper criticisms might not have any effect on your mind. You will, I am sure, pardon the expression of the desire on my part, Wallace, that you may some time know the joy yourself that I feel as I write this letter. There is nothing like the Christian life to give you peace and happiness. And I can wish you nothing better than the same experience that has come to me. My regards to Mrs. Wallace and the family.

"Very cordially, your old classmate and friend,

"ALBERT ANDREWS."

Parts of this letter made Mr. Ralph Wallace angry. When a self-satisfied gentleman like Mr. Wallace, who is fixed in his opinions, receives an intimation, even innocently made, that he is mistaken as to certain deep-seated prejudices, the first feeling he has is a feeling of angry irritation. Such a man does not like to be corrected or enlightened. Nothing is so irritating to your positive, dead-sure man as any statement in the way of proof that he may be mistaken. He was angry that Andrews had written him at all. And as he threw the letter into the waste paper basket he muttered: "Andrews might 'tend to his own business. I'm not interested in all his gossip about this evangelist." Nevertheless the letter annoyed him all day and when he reached home that night he was in a glum humor which showed itself in a moody, disagreeable manner to every member of the family. The usual attitude of the Wallace household on such occasions

was a profound ignoring of the whole thing until it wore off.

Immediately after supper Mrs. Wallace asked Agnes if she was ready to go to the meeting.

"Yes, mother, I'll go. I don't care much about hearing Mr. Spencer, but I would like to hear Mr. Burleigh. Some of the girls think he has a beautiful voice."

Just then the bell rang, and Harry, who happened to be out in the hallway, opened the door. "O, come in, Fairview," Mrs. Wallace and Agnes heard him say. Fairview came in, and as he closed the door said, "Don't you want to come down to the meeting with me to-night? I couldn't get away from a business meeting of the Y. M. C. A. last night. I suppose you didn't go, so I thought maybe you could take the time to-night."

"No, I went with mother last night," Harry replied in some embarrassment. "She and Agnes are going to-night, and

I was planning to put in the evening on my Antigone."

"I'll help you with it when we get home," Fairview said, pleasantly.

"Well, I don't know, I guess maybe I'll go then," Harry said after a pause.

Mrs. Wallace and Agnes came out into the hall and greeted Fairview. "Is it about time to go?" Mrs. Wallace asked.

"Yes, there is every prospect of an overflow to-night. I think we had better go early in order to get seats."

As they were going out Mrs. Wallace said, timidly. "Good-by, Ralph." Mr. Wallace made no answer. The tobacco smoke rolled over the top of his newspaper and he did not even lower it to look at his wife as she slowly closed the door.

Once outside, Harry took his mother s arm, leaving Fairview to go with Agnes. The arrangement had not been premeditated, and Fairview was the last man in college to imagine that a girl like

Agnes Wallace cared one way or the other for him. As a matter of fact, Agnes was delighted with every opportunity she had, which was not often, to talk with Fairview. He was not a good talker either, and as the distance to the place of the meeting was not far, very little was said on the way.

"Does Mr. Burleigh sing to-night?" she asked.

"Yes, he sings every night."

"Do you like him?"

"Yes. He has a splendid voice. But I think I like Mr. Spencer even better."

"I don't think I care much about Mr. Spencer. He is doing it for pay. He's in the preaching business for pay."

Agnes was simply repeating her father's talk in her own sharply critical manner.

"Where did you get that idea?" Fairview asked, slowly.

"O, it's been in the papers. Haven't you seen it?"

"Yes, but I don't believe all I read in the papers, especially when I know it isn't true."

"Do you know it isn't true?"

"Yes, I do. Mr. Spencer is an old college classmate of my father. He knows him very intimately. There never was a more unselfish Christian gentleman in America, father says. Any paper that speaks of Spencer as a religious crank or grafter is saying an untruth." Fairview spoke as near anger as he ever came. Agnes liked it in him.

"I shall listen to him with more interest," she said, frankly, "although I am prejudiced, and might as well say so."

"He can take care of himself, I am sure," Fairview said, gently. And that was about all the conversation that passed between them before the hall was reached.

There was a great crowd. Floor and galleries were packed. Several hundred

people were unable to get in. At the close of the service nearly a hundred people rose and said they wanted to begin a Christian life. The decision cards were passed, and, as before, Harry took one, looked at it and put it unsigned into his pocket. Fairview glanced several times during the service at Mrs. Wallace and Agnes. Once he saw a tear on Mrs. Wallace's cheek. Agnes's face several times expressed deep interest. Spencer had never preached with more impressive appeal. He had spoken on the joy of the Christian faith and had described the empty fruitless results of a negative morality. Over against that he had shown how like a star in the night shone the soul that had Christ at the center. Then his closing appeal had been wonderfully tender and strong in its plain love for the multitude.

"The idea of calling him a crank or a fake!" Fairview heard Wallace mutter. Agnes on the way home had the frankness to say to Fairview: "I'll

take back all I said about Mr. Spencer. He is splendid. I had no idea he was so fine."

"I'm glad," Fairview had said, and that was about all. Only it was noticeable almost nothing was said about Burleigh that night, and even Agnes forgot to mention her feelings, which at the opening of the service had been hurt by one or two crude gospel hymns.

Mr. Wallace had gone to bed. The next morning at the breakfast table he began to ask questions about the meeting and seemed unusually annoyed at the enthusiasm displayed by Mrs. Wallace, Agnes, and Harry, although the boy was less talkative than mother and sister.

"You ought to go yourself, father," Agnes said, boldly. "You would change your mind about him if you once heard him."

"Think so?" Mr. Wallace replied, grimly. "I guess not. I don't often change my mind."

"I wish you would go," Mrs. Wallace said in her timid fashion.

"Well, if I go it will be to please you," Mr. Wallace said, with unexpected good-nature, to the surprise of all the family as he rose to go out.

"Father will never go to the meetings," Agnes said, with incredulity.

"Perhaps he will." Mrs. Wallace spoke with a real longing, longing that had been a stranger to her for years. So much already had that one service done for her.

CHAPTER IV

THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit."

And then, three nights after that, Harry Wallace faced his battle ground of decision. He had been to every meeting so far. Drawn by the sweet compulsion of the Divine Spirit, this young athlete, up to this time three fourths animal, came up to the place where his soul had to have a chance at itself. He realized that it was not play time at all, but grim, earnest, serious, everlasting reality that he had to grapple with. He held one of the decision cards in his hand. He had already put five in his pocket, one for each night he had attended the meetings. Mr. Spencer had preached this night on "Personal Decision." "What wilt thou do with the Christ?" Harry understood what it all meant. He was not bewildered or con-

fused in the least. Light in plenty had come to him. His hesitation was on account of the clearness and greatness of the light. Could he live up to it? Was he equal to this great Life? He read the words at the top of the little card: "I decide that henceforth I will lead a Christian Life." Then he read underneath the words, "For the Lord God will help me." He waited a little longer. The usher had given him a lead pencil. He had taken it mechanically. The evangelist was talking. He kept listening to him, and every word he said was distinct and clear. "Don't make your decision about the new life without clearly realizing what it means. It means for some of you restitution of ill gotten money in business, for others it means practicing the brotherhood after all your lives so far lived in the atmosphere of caste and pride; for some of you it will mean forgiving old enemies or loving them when you have hated them for years; for others here this deci-

sion will mean changing the old habits of ill temper, or perverseness, or fault-finding, or ingratitude, or impurity, or pride, into the habits which are the exact opposite. In other words, if you make a real, true decision to lead an honest Christian life, it will mean the complete overturning of all the old selfish habits of a lifetime, Christ on the throne, the kingdom of God the first passion of the soul, and righteousness the great hunger of the whole being. This is not a decision, therefore, to make lightly or as if it meant little. It is the greatest step you will ever take. But if God's grace is sufficient for you, as it always is, take the step, make the decision, with joy. Don't be afraid, for the Lord God will help you!"

Harry heard all this distinctly. He remembered afterward that he signed his name while the people were singing the Glory song, one of the hymns that Agnes had severely criticized the evening before. When he went home he was

conscious of a certain well-defined feeling of peace. He had had a talk with Mr. Spencer and it had helped him greatly. For twenty-one years—all his life—he had known only what is called nominal Christianity. He had been born into a civilization saturated with Christian ideas, but had personally received only as much as outward surroundings can give. Now that the Spirit of God moving on his spirit had touched him in his own real life, he was literally a new creature. Old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new. The miracle of regeneration had come to him as it has come to thousands of other souls, and his stalwart nature responded to it with enthusiasm. Truly Fairview was right when he had said to him, "God could do great things with you if you would let him."

In the morning he faced the family at the breakfast table with a strong feeling of embarrassment. It was not fear or cowardice or shame, but a knowledge

that he had begun to live in a different world from that of his father, his sister, and his brother. His mother could understand in part at least, and after breakfast before he went out to his college work he told her what he had done. The quick response she made, the sight of the joyful tear in her eyes affected him profoundly. He had time for only a brief talk with her, but it meant very much to him. In the family circle it meant that one member of it at least understood and sympathized with him.

How little we know or anticipate of the strange and unexpected events in our lives! That afternoon while going through his regular practice on the campus, Harry, who had never before been hurt at any of the athletic games, during the very last minute of the scrub practice fell under a pile of players, and when all the others rose he remained on the ground. Fairview was kneeling by him in an instant.

"What is it, old man?"

"Collar bone I think," Wallace answered with a faint smile on his pale face.

Fairview slid his hand gently along the shoulder and up the neck. Then he raised his head and said to the group standing around: "Awful sorry, fellows. It's the collar bone all right. And the big game only ten days off."

"He'll hardly make it, will he?" was the anxious query.

"Well, hardly," Fairview replied, grimly. "Old man, I'm so sorry."

They improvised a stretcher and carried him home. When the doctor had come and set the bone, Harry made him say how soon he could play again. "No more this season, young fellow," said the doctor.

"Can't you patch me up for the big game, Doctor?"

"Yes, and the patches would come undone after the first kick-off." The doctor was inexorable. He assured Harry that his trouble was more serious

than he imagined, and that he might be thankful if he got out on the campus by next spring in time for the baseball season, and left him with the comforting assurance that it might have been his neck instead of his collar bone.

But the whole thing was a strange and in the end a true test of his newfound life. For ten years he had worshiped muscle, wind, endurance, flesh. Here he was suddenly flung down off that pedestal, put on the list of shut-ins, reduced to practice invalidism, all his accustomed scorn of weakness flung back at him, the crack center of the team, the hero of the class, the unscathed one who had so often boasted that it was only the weakling who got hurt in a scrimmage. Put on the sick list by the scrub team of his own college in a light practice game! For the first few minutes of reflection after the doctor had gone out, hot rebellion surged up in him and he could not reconcile himself to it. Then there followed almost immediately

a feeling of submission that was a new experience. His mother discovered him crying a little. He had not done that since he was a very little boy. Her accustomed mild affection leaped on the instant over all barriers and she fell on her knees by his bedside, and called him by long-forgotten pet names of baby-hood. To her surprise, he soon began to laugh in a natural way and assured her that he had really much to be thankful for.

"I'll be a good invalid, mother," he said. "Now that I'm here, I'll not let my back hair down and wail over it. Don't pity me. I've got great blessings and I appreciate them."

And, to the astonishment of all the family, to no one more than to his father, Harry as the days went on proved himself capable of great self-control and large-heartedness. The new life was so marked a thing that it could not be concealed or mistaken for anything else. The second day of his illness the pastor

of the Presbyterian church called to see him. It was in the evening and Mr. Wallace, Agnes, and John happened all to be in the room. During the minister's brief stay Harry frankly told him of his signing the decision card and expressed his desire to join the church as soon as he was able to get to church. The minister received the news with evident emotion and in a few well-chosen words let Harry know how much he was pleased with his decision. He had risen to go when Harry said in a natural, frank way, "Dr. Barton would you offer a prayer before you go?" Dr. Barton knelt and offered a prayer in his simple, helpful way, rose, said good-by to Harry and the rest, and at once went out. The moment he had gone out of the room Mr. Wallace, who had been standing by the table during this episode, turned his back on his children and walked out without a word. Agnes and John seemed embarrassed by the incident, but made no comment. Harry

seemed to take it all as a matter of course, and was unusually cheerful and happy all the evening.

The next afternoon Ambrose Spencer called for a few minutes. Mrs. Wallace and Harry were both helped by his cheery, sensible presence. In the evening Mrs. Wallace mentioned his visit while the family were at supper. Mr. Wallace made no comment at the time. After supper he said as he picked up the paper and lighted his cigar, "I suppose Spencer will expect us to bring Harry to the meetings in a hack. It wouldn't do for him to miss any of the meetings, would it?"

No one said anything to this outburst, and after a while Mr. Wallace looked up and spoke directly to his wife.

"Are you going out to-night, Lucy?"

"No, I expect to stay with Harry."

"You going, Agnes?"

"No, sir, I'm not planning to go."

"Are you?" he continued, turning to John.

John colored up and replied, shortly, "No, sir, I have not been and don't expect to go."

"Well, I'm glad if we can have the family together one night in the week. It's a rare occasion," Mr. Wallace grumbled as he turned to his paper again.

"I suppose, then, father," said Agnes, in her usual sharp incisive manner, "that you will make yourself entertaining and agreeable to us as usual?" Mr. Wallace answered by an inarticulate grunt. His customary habit in the evening was to read and smoke, paying little attention to anyone else.

Two nights after that Mrs. Wallace timidly said as the family rose from the supper table: "Harry insists that he does not need any watching any longer and wants me to go out to the meeting to-night. So if you don't mind, Ralph, I'll go. I think Mrs. Thomas can go with me. Agnes says she would rather

stay with Harry. The meetings close next week."

Mr. Wallace looked up from his paper. Something about the wistful look on his wife's face seemed to impress him strangely. He hesitated a moment. What was passing in his mind he told her some time afterward in one of those moments of rare confidence of which her life had been almost empty. He said it swept over him in a self-accusing wave a mountain high, how for twenty-five years he had selfishly exercised what he called his rights and allowed his wife to go to church and religious gatherings unattended, or thrown upon the courtesy of neighbors. He got up and threw his cigar into the grate and with an embarrassed manner said, "Well, Lucy, what would you say if I offered to go with you?"

Mrs. Wallace gasped in astonishment. Agnes stared at her father as if he were crazy. John uttered a low whistle of amazement.

"Come on," Mr. Wallace said, abruptly, going into the hall and getting his overcoat. "I suppose we don't need to stay to any after meeting."

Mrs. Wallace struggled with emotions that were new to her. "I shall be so happy to have you go, Ralph," she said, and again the wistful look heightened more by a gleam of pleasure smote Mr. Wallace anew. When they had gone out there was a moment of deep silence in the sitting room. Then Agnes rose and ran upstairs to Harry's room.

"Harry, what do you think? Father has gone out to the meeting with mother!"

"Thank God," Harry murmured in such a low tone his sister scarcely heard. She did see the tear that rolled over the cheek. All that evening Harry Wallace lay there praying incessantly that the Holy Spirit would reach his father. Would anyone after the great history of prayer is recalled dare say that what

came to pass that night was not in direct answer to that son's petition?

The meetings, which had been in progress now for two weeks, had to the sensitive mind of the evangelist reached a crisis. The spirit of criticism was gone, the spirit of prayer had swept it out of the meeting place. For two nights now he had been obliged to ask the Christian people to go to prayer meetings in the neighboring houses so that the non-church people could find room in the building. God's Spirit had never been so really and wonderfully felt in Westville. People acknowledged its power and bowed before it.

Into this atmosphere of waiting Ralph Wallace and his wife came on that memorable night. I do not think it was any especial eloquence on the part of the preacher that made possible the remarkable "conversion," as all Westville called it, of Ralph Wallace. The evangelist certainly would not claim anything of the kind for himself. It

was an unmistakable instance of the power of God to take a life and subdue it to his own will. God has been doing this thing in every century with apparently unsavable material. He will continue to do it as long as men live to prove his majestic ownership of man's life. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

That night Ralph Wallace let the Spirit have complete control of him. Afterward he confessed he had determined not to go to the meetings for fear something of the kind might come to him. In a voice that choked with happy emotion he confessed to Ambrose Spencer his faith in Christ. This was in an after meeting at which over one hundred men and women acknowledged for the first time their love to God and their desire to live his life.

It was nearly half-past eleven o'clock when Mr. and Mrs. Wallace entered their own home. Mrs. Wallace walked

like one in a dream. She seemed to fear it would not prove true. Agnes and John had gone to their rooms, but Harry was awake, and as his father and mother came upstairs he called out to them. They came in, and to his dying day Ralph Wallace will never forget the look his son cast at him as the light first fell on his redeemed face.

"Thank God! O father," he cried, "my prayer has been answered soon!" Never had these two known such an experience. Mr. Wallace and his wife knelt. For a moment the Divine Presence was distinctly felt in that all-mastering joy which I am sure the angels in heaven have some way of making men feel when one sinner on the earth repents. From Ralph Wallace's broken prayer as it ascended that night there rose a spirit of fragrant incense to God, for one of the most beautiful events in the world was beginning there that night—the birth of a new family affection founded on mutual religious

faith, the most joyful and enduring tie that binds human hearts together.

We have not time here to relate in detail the after results of Ralph Wallace's newly begun life. The meetings came to an end. The evangelist departed. The papers had exhausted their accounts of the events which had absorbed the time and thought of the public. Many people still smiled at the idea of Wallace as a churchman. One Sunday when Harry was able to go, he and his father joined the church to which Mrs. Wallace had for so many years belonged. Everyone noted the thoughtful happiness of Mr. Wallace and his son. As time went on there in Westville those who knew him best noted marked changes in his habits. He became an enthusiast in missions. He was unexpectedly humble where once he had been proud and haughty. His once constant habit of cynical criticism passed out of his life. People said, "Wallace is really a changed man." He was more than

that. He was a new man. The old man had passed away. All things had become new. The prayer circle was formed. The Bible was honored. Spiritual things were given high place in the Wallace household. Mrs. Wallace renewed her youth and her church life took on new significance. A happy woman, her daily prayer was, "O God, bring my other children in the Kingdom." Who shall say that prayer will not be answered?

We are permitted to read a portion of a letter written, soon after his union with the church, by Mr. Wallace to his college classmate, Albert Andrews. This letter revealed in part the writer's sense of what had befallen him.

"I have already told you, Andrews, of the astonishing suddenness with which all the experience came to me. But it is no more than has happened to very many other souls in the history of the world, and I am grateful every moment of my life at the event, no matter how it

occurred. I am now praying that my other children, Agnes and John, may become Christians with us. They did not make any confession during the meetings. But I am living in great faith that they will enter with us into the living way. My oldest boy, Harry, is a splendid fellow. He is preparing himself for a physician and his influence is marked and strong in the college. As for myself, Andrews, I am compelled to confess I was, up to this experience, a pagan. There is no other word to define my life. The years have been largely wasted. Praise God, I will do my utmost to atone and make good. A wonderful thing is the grace of God through Christ. I owe much, very much to Ambrose Spencer. He is one of God's noblemen. Since he left us, his little girl has died and his wife is dangerously ill. No doubt you have heard. Let us join our prayers for him and his. I ask you to pray with us for our children. I have been a poor father

to them. I let them grow up without any thought of their eternal life. The only dark thought I have now in the midst of all my joy is the thought that I was for so many years untrue and false to my trust as a parent. God forgive that also. And if in any way I can make it good now to my family, by his grace I shall do it. For I have at the age of fifty-five begun really to live. Mrs. Wallace joins me in good wishes to Mrs. Andrews and yourself and all the family.

"Your old classmate and friend,

"RALPH WALLACE."

W6-CLR-893